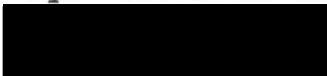


ETHNIC STUDIES 221
Project on The Salt Lake Development

Written By: Shonn A. Hirota


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INTRODUCTION

Salt Lake is a very special place to me because I have resided in this area for the past 15 years of my life. During this time, I have watched how much the area has developed. I vaguely remember the area as being a flat open land with several residential houses and apartments. But today, Salt Lake is known as "The Concrete Jungle" because of all the apartments and condominiums.

Every land division has its own unique historical development. It is very beneficial for an individual to be familiar with the history or roots of their inhabitant. I chose to research on Salt Lake's development to enhance my awareness and knowledge of the past, present, and future Salt Lake area.

SALT LAKE DISTRICT

LEGEND OF SALT LAKE

After fleeing Kaua'i, Pele and her two brothers arrived on the northern shores of Oahu. They traveled from valley to valley seeking a permanent home away from the dreaded Kamapua'a. Having found a beautiful stream valley in what is now known as Moanalua, she was delighted to stay because it was rich with maile and ginger.

Meanwhile, Kamapua'a, a beast who appeared as a man or pig, had followed her from Kaua'i. Lured by Pele's beauty, he desired to possess her. He had made many attempts to seize her, but her brothers protected her well. As he found her gazing into a pool, he was fooled into reaching for her reflected image of which her brothers created. It is told that as Pele and her brothers fled, the tears she shed formed Aliapa'akai or Salt Lake.

GENERAL HISTORY

On the north west side of Moanalua, Oahu was a place called Aliapa'akai--better known today as Salt Lake. The Hawaiian translation of Aliapa'akai means salted area. There were many myths about the origin of Aliapa'akai. One myth stated that Pele tried to dig a dry cave in this area. Striking salt water, she called this place Aliapa'akai, the Salt March. A second myth described how Pele and Hiiaka came to this area and dug down into the ground and made a home. Departing from Kaua'i, they brought some salt with them and deposited this in their new home.

Historical records have shown that the lake had no direct connection with the ocean. "Since the base of the crater was practically at mean sea level and indents the main water table, the springs formerly along the northern edge of the lake were probably depressional springs."¹ Before the creation of the artificial lake in 1910 (for use as a reservoir), the rise of the water table during rainy periods caused the water to flow into the crater. This inflow of water carried extreme amounts of salt. During the drier periods of the year, the lake partially dried up from evaporation. This cycle of replenished water and evaporation was responsible for the accumulation of salt in the lake.

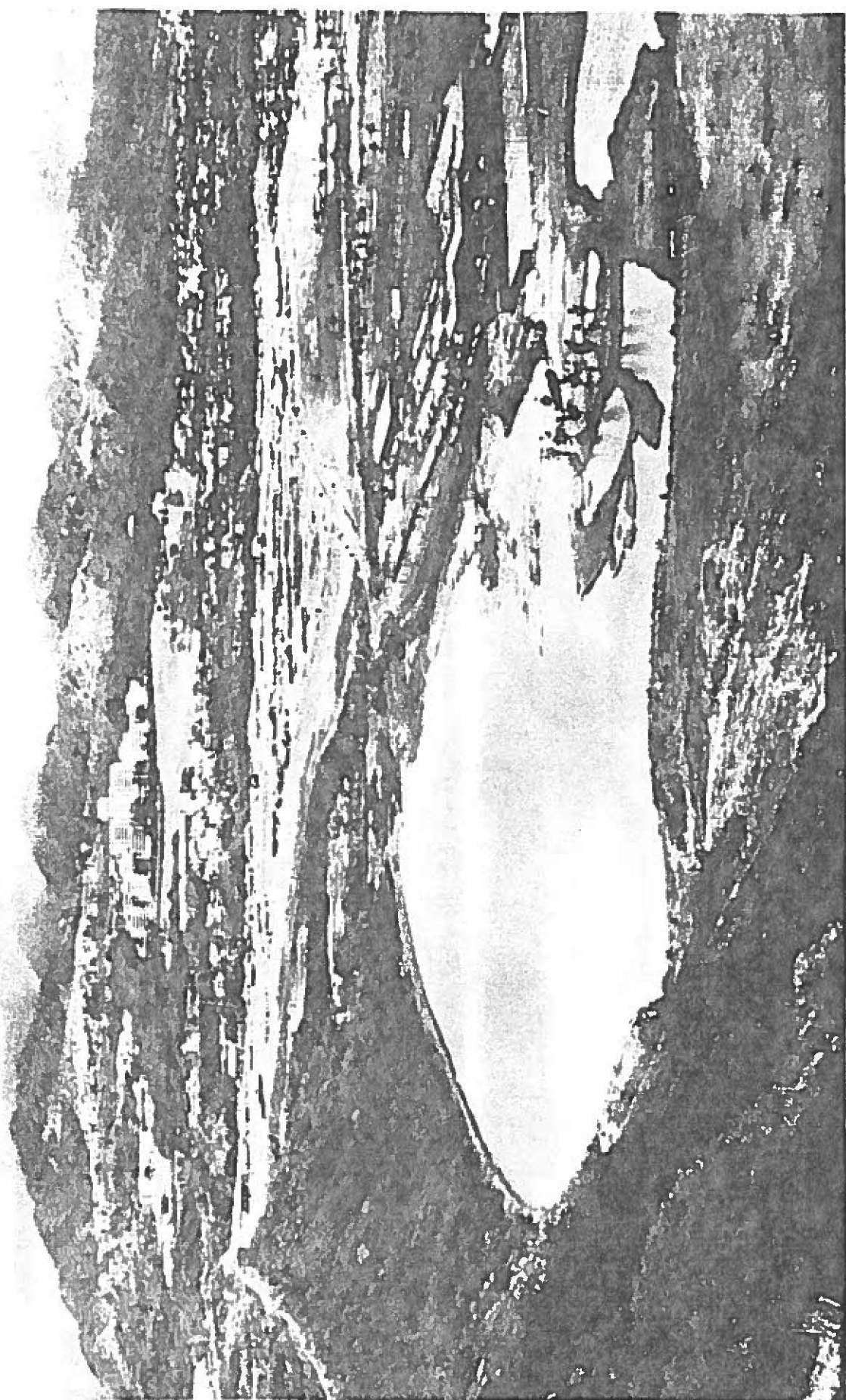
Foreigners were interested in Salt Lake from early times. James Montgomery of London Missionary Society referred to Salt Lake in a publication of 1831:

"The lake is about a mile and a quarter in length, by $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile in width, perhaps 5 or 6 feet deep, encrusted with a layer of salt above black mud--a brilliant and singular appearance in the crystal clear pool as you look down upon it; while around it, flakes a pure salt, ivory white, lie glistening in the sunbeams. The sale is laid up to dry, in conical heaps, upon long grass spread over the ground."

During Kamehameha III's reign, a great number of people were occasionally hired to collect the salt in calabashes for sale for visiting merchant ships as preservatives for provisions and as table salt.

In the early 1900's, the inner slopes of the crater was covered with sugar cane. When it rained, it washed red dirt out of the plowed fields, plugging the underground channels. In a few years, the water level of the lake became static. As a result of





SALT LAKE, 1979

this, the Honolulu Sugar Plantation decided to use the lake as a reservoir. In 1910, an artesian well was drilled in the shallows of the lake. Thus, it provided a large inflow of fresh water. Salt Lake became a fish pond, suited for raising mullet. The lake was also a habitat for a variety of Hawaiian waterbirds.

HISTORY OF SALT LAKE DEVELOPMENT

1957: In April 1957, 1200 acres of vacant land was sold by the trustees of S.M. Damon Estate to Territorial Investors for \$10 million. These lands stretched from the mountains to the sea, and included lands ewa and diamond head of Tripler Army Medical Center, the airport industrial area, and the Salt Lake area. In March 1957, International Development Co. was established to begin in sales, subdivisions, and development of those lands situated in Moanalua which had been sold to Territorial Investors. By September 1957, the first plan for development was submitted to the City Planning Commission. This included plans for Moanalua Valley and Moanalua Gardens subdivisions, as well as the area around the lake. George Houghtailing, a former City Planning Director, submitted the plans drawn by R.M. Towill and Community Planning Inc. The plans called for a 22 acre lakeside park, an elementary school, an 80 acre regional shopping center, 40 acres of hotel/apartment zoning, and a 10 acre private park.

The lake was 13 feet deep. Mr. Houghtailing knew that developers had to dug quite deep so that there could be swimming, water skiing, and marinas for boating. Seven acres had been set aside for a private park with Japanese and Chinese gardens and tea houses. He expected that the development would provide Honolulu with an

unique, premium resort area.

The plans were approved by the City Planning Commission on October 21, 1957. A request from the Honolulu Redevelopment Agency for 20 acres joining the lake from middle income housing was not approved. Also turned down was a request from the Hawaiian Housing Authority for 22 acres for low income housing. Although the need for this category of housing was recognized members of the Commission felt that it was not appropriate in the development plans, which was geared to meet the needs of moderate and high income groups for fee simple homes.

In November, Clarence Ching, general partner in International Development Co., announced the beginning of development work on a 3,000 home subdivision. He hoped to have 500-600 homes per year. He noted that the boundaries of the lake were yet to be determined, but guaranteed the public that the development would be deluxe, with marinas, restaurants, and parks. Work on this was to begin in 1958.

1958-1963: During this period, development primarily occurred in Moanalua Valley, Moanalua Gardens, and Red Hill. Land in the Salt Lake area remained vacant. Some important corporations and partnerships were formed about this time. International Development Co. (IDC), was established in 1957 to develop land. Associated with IDC in this business was Loyalty Enterprises which was formed in January 1958, Loyalty Insurance and Loyalty Finance. The corporations and partnerships which were most active in developing the Salt Lake area, their original officers and dates of establishment are on the following page. Many of the officers are also members of the same family or related by marriage.

NAME	Date of Estab- lishment	ACTIVITIES	Original Officers/ Partners
Dynamic Industries	1969	General Con- tracting	Clarence Ching, L. Ching, L. Loo, George Hong, Wallace Ching
Hawaii National Bank	1960	Banking	K. J. Luke, Clarence Ching C. Mau
International Development Company	1957	Land Develop- ment	C. Ching Thomas Awai, F. T. Mau
Loyalty Enterprises	1958	Building, Mortgage, Development	K. J. Luke, Clarence Ching, C. Mau, George Hong, Thomas Awai
Loyalty Finance	1967	Mortgage, Loans	Thomas Awai, George Hong, Kenneth Tom
Loyalty Insurance	1959	Insurance	K. J. Luke, Clarence Ching, Raymond Ho
Territorial Investors	1957	Real Estate	Thomas Awai, Herbert Ching A. L. Ho

1964: In 1964, the State Land Use Commission, established by Act 187, Session Laws 1961 as amended by Act 205, Session Laws 1963, classified lands into three classes: urban, agricultural and conservation.

The specific uses permitted in lands which are classified as urban depended upon City and County zoning, whereas the use of lands classified as conservation require the permission of the State Department of Land and Natural Resources.

At this time, the State Land Use Commission established the boundaries of the lake and classified it as conservation. Lands

surrounding the lake were classified urban. These boundaries were protested by Raymond Tam, attorney for IDC, and the engineering firm of Sunn, Low, Tom and Hara. They requested that the following areas be reclassified from conservation to urban:

- a. Certain shorelands around the lake which were then under water
- b. Lands exceeding 20% slope ewa of Salt Lake
- c. Lands exceeding 20% slope mauka of Salt Lake

The Sunn firm also wanted: improvements to the shoreline, possibility of a large green open spaces, improved grading for the construction of homes and the planting of grass and trees. According to Sunn, "Urbanization would permit a relatively unattractive area to be beautified and become a lovely residential area around the only natural lake in Hawaii." The requests were approved by the Land Use Commission. Thus 66 acres of land, which had been originally classified as conservation lands, were reclassified urban and became available for development.

1965: On June 15, 1965, the City Council adopted Ordinance 2646, a detailed land use plan for the Salt Lake area. The plan showed a lake which was reduced in size from 260 acres to 200 acres. Part of the shoreline was to be filled in for a subdivision of 1,000 single family lots, and 300 apartment lots. The proposed apartment areas were to be "garden apartments" which were 2 to 3 stories high.

A week after the ordinance was approved by the City Council, Clarence Ching and Tim Ho, former State Director of Transportation, announced plans for a 335 acre, 27 hole golf course. The golf course would include a country club, swimming pool, and tennis

courts. It would be financed through the sale of 600 memberships at \$3,000 each.

The lake, which had been shown a week earlier in plans presented to the City Council, was now shown as a 27 hole golf course. According to Donald Iwai, attorney for IDC, the golf course would still have to meet the drainage requirements for a 200 acre ponding area, through the use of 35-50 acres of natural water hazards for the golf course.

An additional advantage of the project, according to the developers, was that it would provide more social and community activities and an advantage for businessmen who would want to have lunch there. The proposal for the golf course had to be approved by the State Department of Land and Natural Resources. The board would have to determine if a golf course was an acceptable use of conservation land. Herman Lemke, Chairman of the City Council, felt that the lake should be preserved. He became concerned because of the new developments.

1966: In July 1966, IDC applied to the City Planning Commission for an amendment to the detailed land use plan in order to rezone additional acreage from residential to apartment. The application was analyzed in terms of the need for low and medium income housing in Honolulu. At this time, the question of the golf course was still pending before the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

At public hearings on the rezoning, Joseph Spacek, Co-chairman for the Community Coordinating Committee, was concerned about the sufficient number of schools and recreational facilities. He pointed out that if the area was to be developed for low and middle

income groups, there wouldn't be a need for a golf course, which was private and mostly for the high income group. The golf course did not seem to merge into this division at the time when there was only 4 acres of public parks for the area. He urged the developer to consider the needs of the surrounding community.

Ed Tangen, of the ILWU, noted at the Planning Commission hearing that the first map introduced by the developer in 1965 showed a lake of 202 acres, the next showed 179 acres surrounded by high-rises, and the third showed no lake at all. Donald Iwai, attorney for IDC, responded that costs made it impossible for the developer to maintain the lake.

Just before the public hearings on the proposed golf course, the artesian wells in the lake were capped by IDC which reduced the level of the lake. "Proponents of the lake, subsequently denied the claim of the developers that the lake is a stagnant and polluted body of water, though they did not publicly link this alleged condition to the capping of the artesian wells."²

In August, 1966 the Board of Land and Natural Resources began its hearings. Paul Tajima, planner for the Department stated that the staff suggested that the lake should be used for a golf course. Letters from other state agencies, such as the Department of Health, the Fish and Game Division, the Parks Division, all said that they had no objections to the plan. Letters from businesses, such as United Airlines, urged the construction of the golf course to meet the needs of the tourists. Henry Damon said that the lake was artificial and not worth preserving. Geologists stated that the lake was artificial. Additional witnesses said that the lake was inappropriate for recreation, wildlife, or fishing.

On September 9, 1966, the Board unanimously approved the filling of 170 acres of the lake, with 35 acres to be left for waterways for the golf course. IDC said that work would begin immediately and the project would be completed by 1968.

1971: Between 1966 and 1971, no work was done on the golf course, although various parts of the shoreline were filled in. By 1971, residents saw the lack of park space and became frightened by the increase development. The only available recreational spaces were the playgrounds joining the elementary school and the high school. The Salt Lake area had less than half the recreational requirements call for in the general plan. The Concerned Citizens of Salt Lake petitioned the City and County to restrict high density development, to prevent additional rezoning of conservation lands around the lake, and to preserve Salt Lake.

1972-1973: An investigative series which appeared in the Star Bulletin stirred up interest in the Salt Lake area. "According to reporter Tom Coffman, officials of the State Board of Land and Natural Resources had not been impartial at the time of the 1966 hearings and hearings were prejudiced; there had been no state study of the costs to clean up and preserve the lake, and the 1964 urban zoning decision on the area around the lake had been secured by giving the impression that the lake would be preserved."³ The Governor ordered a review of the case by Shoji Kato, chief Planner for the State Planning Division. His report was not made public.

After several years, IDC requested additional rezoning for the area. This time, they offered the City and County 23 acres of park land at 3 sites, plus 109 acres of ridgeline open space, in

exchange for the City's support for their application to the State Land Use Commission to rezone 29.4 acres of conservation land to urban which would request the City to zone for highrise development. Nine acres of the total was to come from conservation lands which had been set aside for the proposed golf course. The plan was enthusiastically supported by Mayor Fasi, who told the Lakeside Community Association that this was the only way the residents were going to get the park lands they wanted so badly. The plan was initially supported for this reason by the Lakeside Community Association. Later on, in January 1973, the Association voted to change its mind. An ad hoc committee of the Association met to discuss this. They found that such a "deal" was not the only way to get park lands, and that other ways were available.

In October 1972, the Board of Land and Natural Resources approved a request from IDC for an 18 hole golf course, a reduction from the proposed 27 hole golf course. The plan covered only 175 acres, whereas the original proposal covered 220 acres.

Hearings on the petition to rezone were called by the State Land Use Commission. IDC submitted a report by William Perreira Associates. The report justified the rezoning on the grounds that the existing recreational facilities were totally inadequate, and that there was a need for low-middle, and moderate income housing.

In February 1973, the State Land Use Commission denied the rezoning on the grounds that the developer could not guarantee that his representations would be possible.

Throughout 1973, activity continued in an effort to preserve the lake. Resolutions were introduced in the House and Senate. However, none of these was adopted.

SALT LAKE DISTRICT PARK

In February 1979, Wilson Okamoto & Associates realized that the Salt Lake district need a recreational facility. They devised a plan for the Salt Lake district park which included a complete list of the existing and proposed recreational facilities, population, and athletic organizations. The plan showed that there was an insufficient number of recreational facilities for the Salt Lake area's present population.

The proposed plan included the following recreational facilities:

<u>Recreational Facilities Needed</u>	<u>Number</u>
Gymnasium	2
Swimming Pool	1
Softball Field	7
Baseball Field	2
Basketball Court (Outdoor)	15
Volleyball Court (Outdoor)	5
Tennis Courts	9
Football/Soccer Fields	2

The Department of Parks and Recreation guidelines said that there should be a minimum of 3 acres of recreational area per 1,000 population. The Salt Lake area has a total population of approximately 36,000. Therefore, there should be 100 acres of park space in Salt Lake. A list of the current parks in the Salt Lake area and their acres are shown below:

<u>Park</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Moanalua Playground	4.5
Aliamanu Playground	4.5
Hoaloha Park	4.0
Salt Lake (temporary)	5.0
TOTAL	<u>18.0</u> ±

The proposed site areas for the park are (1) the lake and (2) the steep Aliamanu Crater Slopes. There will be 2 facility development areas. One is the makai park area which is approximately 10+

(acres and located adjacent to Salt Lake Elementary School. This division would include the gym complex, swimming pool, playing fields, outdoor courts, parking and circulation, tot lot (swings, slides, etc.), and the public restrooms.

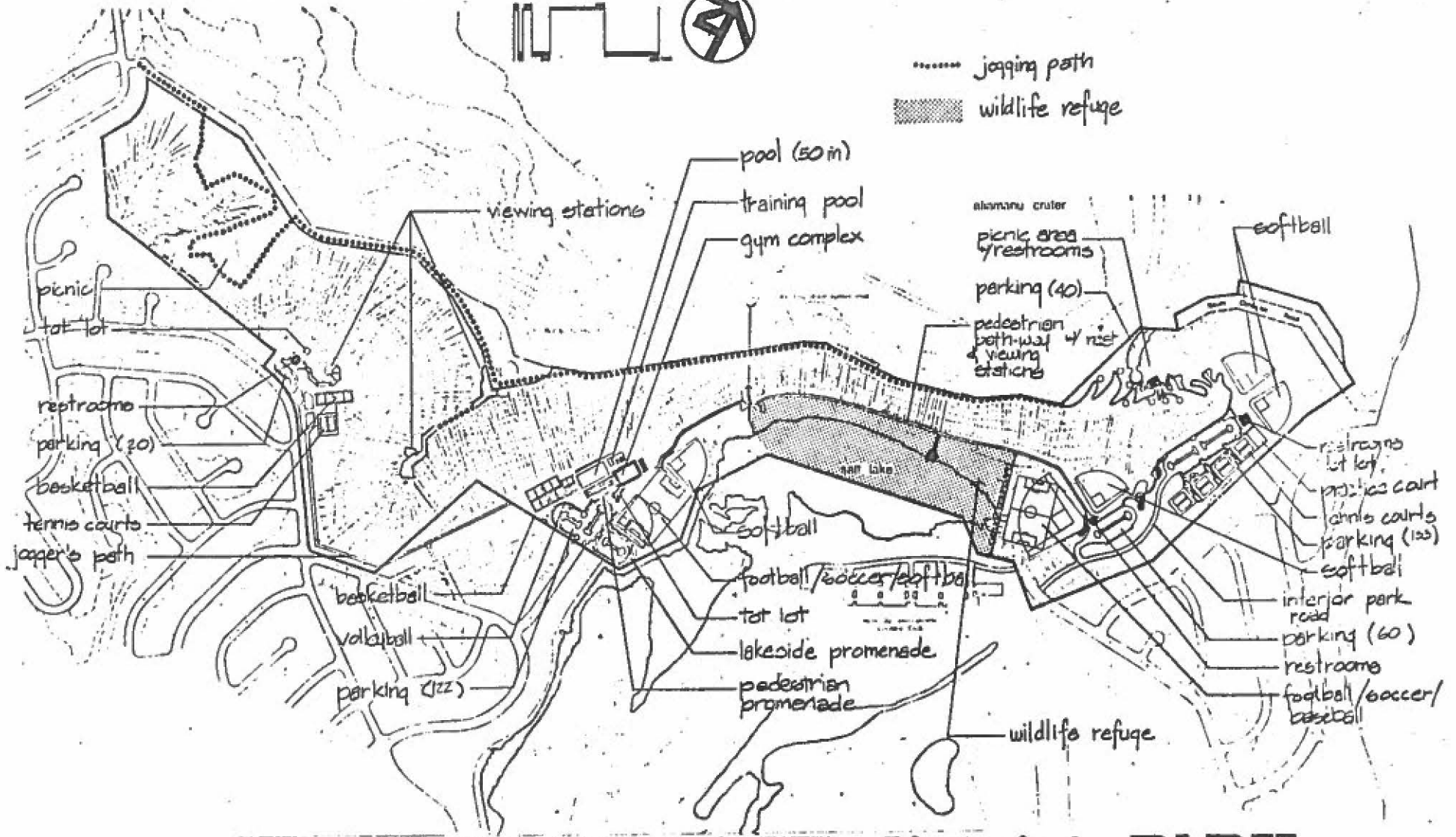
The second division is the mauka area which is approximately 12+ acres of sloping land and located in the valley at the mauka end of the park. It also includes an additional 4+ acres of picnic area. This area would include playing fields, tennis courts, picnic area, parking and circulation, restroom, and tot land.

In addition to the 2 facility areas, there will also be other development areas such as Likini Street Park and Wanaka Street area. A hiking/jogging trail will be established throughout the 152+ acre park.

(According to Wilson Okamoto and Associates, the project goal is to "maximize use of the limited lands suitable for recreational development within the park boundaries, in order to provide the maximum amount of recreational facilities and opportunities for the communities comprising the Salt Lake District Park planning area.

(Recently, I had a talk with an architect named Walter who is part of Wilson Okamoto & Associates. He said that they are presently building a gymnasium behind the Arts & Crafts building. (see the following pages) The cost of the gym is approximately \$1-1.5 million (\$50/sq. ft.). The dimensions are 30,000-35,000 sq. ft. The City & County: Department of Parks & Recreation is funding this project. As for any future developments, there will be none. Walter commented that there aren't sufficient funds to carry out the proposed plan of the Salt Lake District Park.

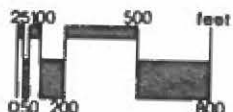
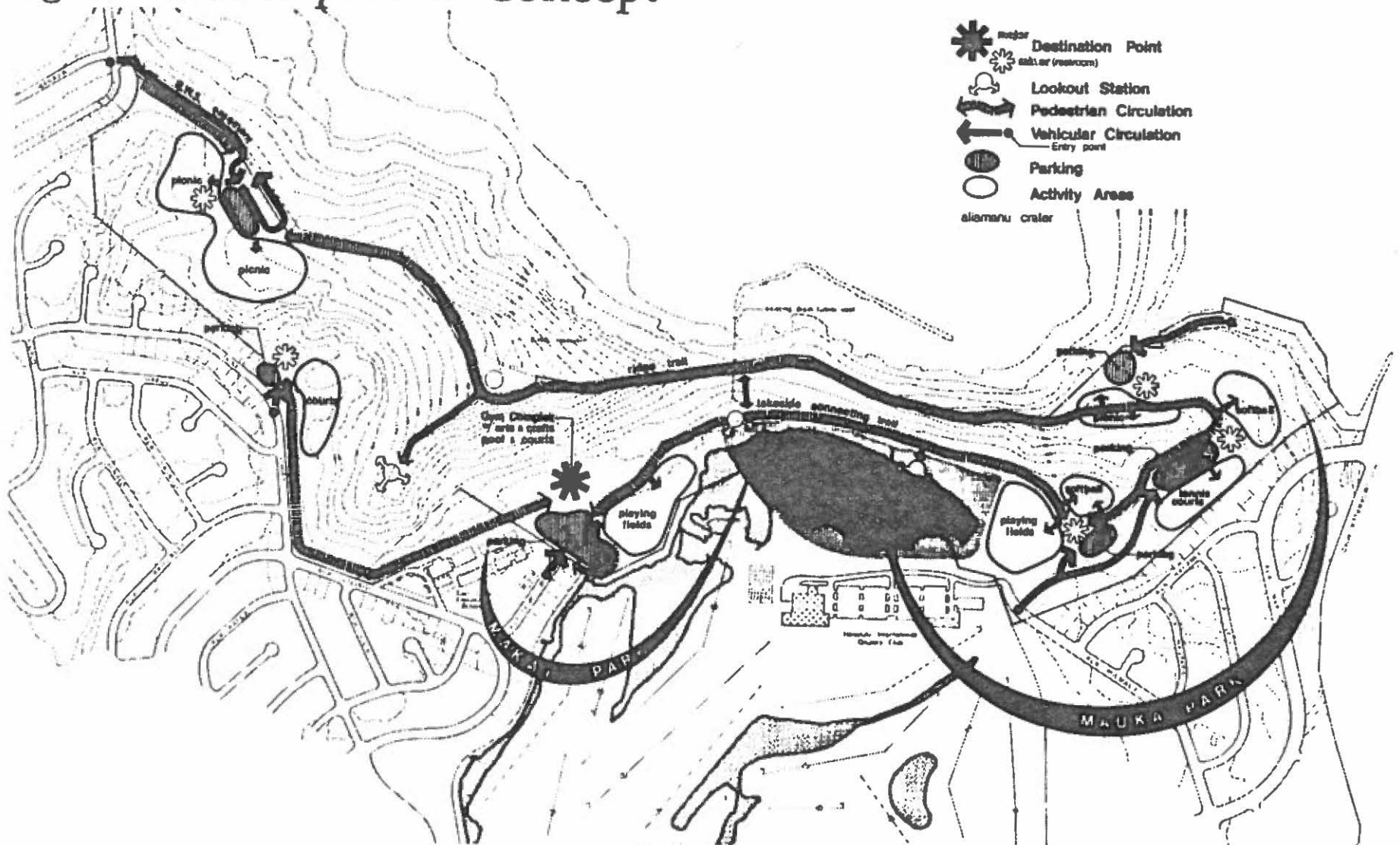
Master Plan



SALT LAKE district PARK
 City and County of Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation

prepared by:
 Wilson Okamoto
 & Associates, Inc.

fig. 15 Development Concept



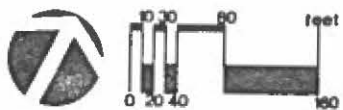
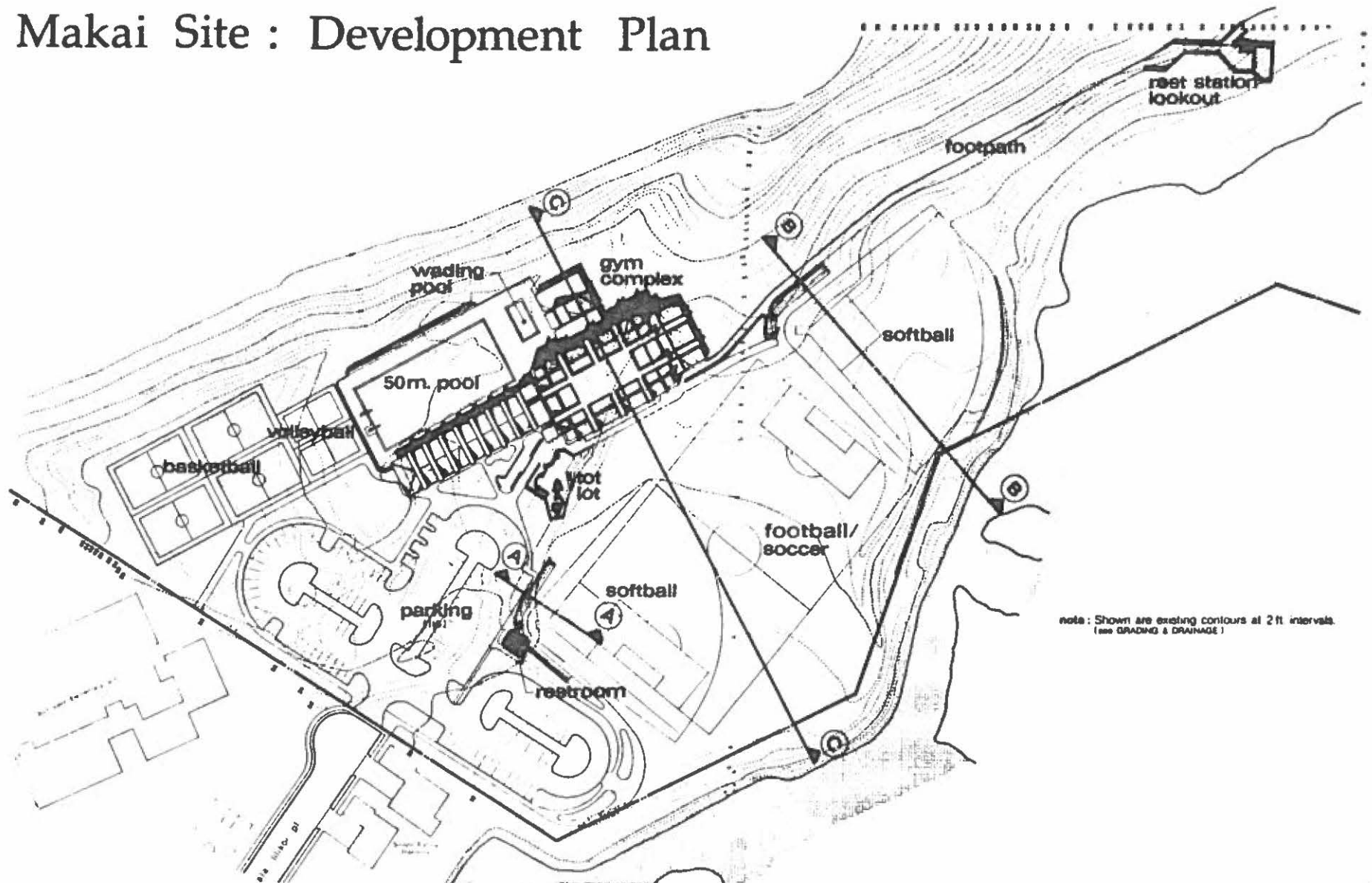
Salt Lake District Park

City and County of Honolulu
Department of Parks and Recreation

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fig. 16

Makai Site : Development Plan



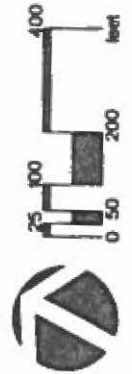
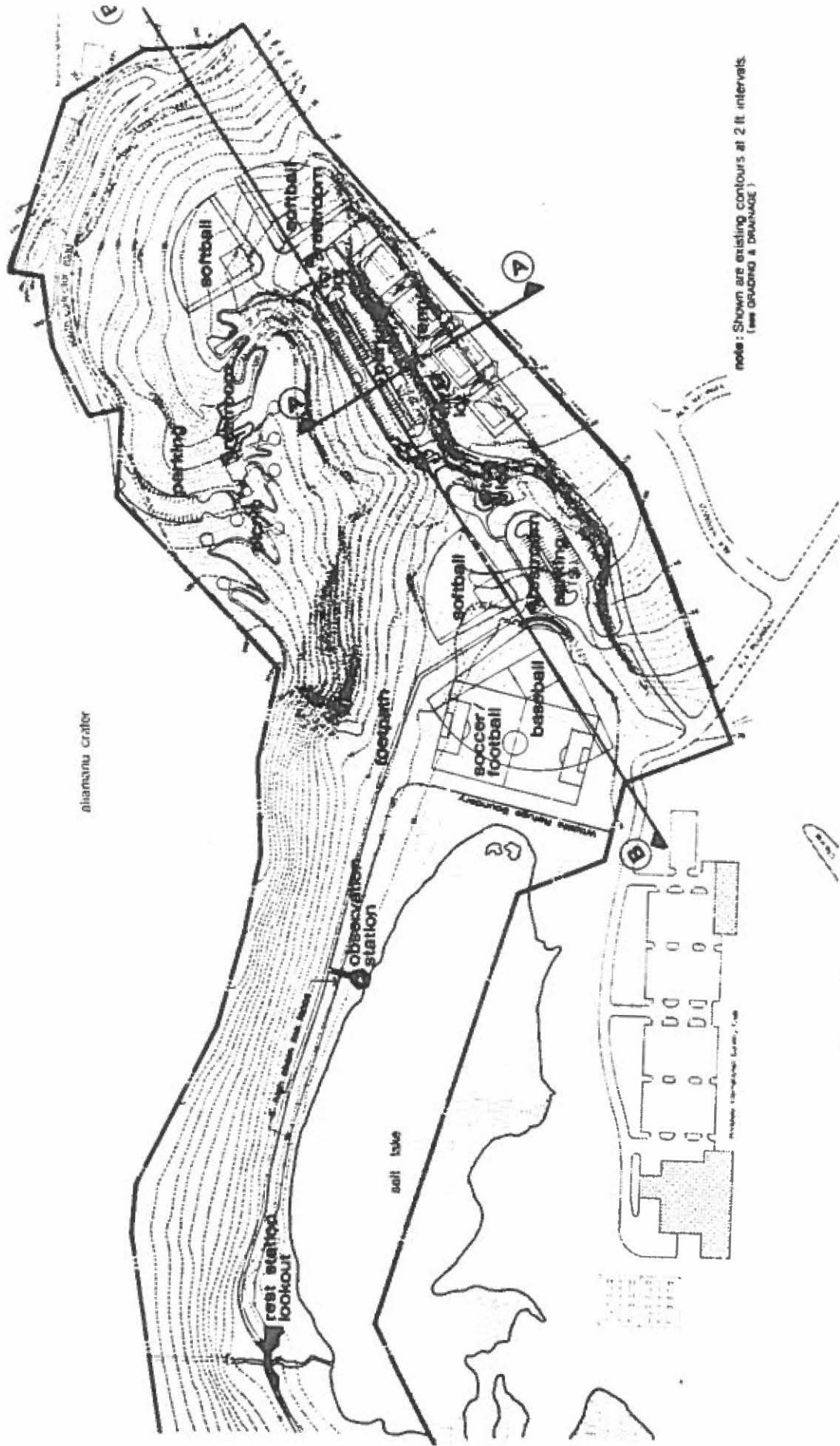
Salt Lake District Park

City and County of Honolulu
Department of Parks and Recreation

prepared by: WILSON OKAMOTO & ASSOCIATES

fig. 19

Mauka Site: Development Plan



Salt Lake District Park

City and County of Honolulu
Department of Parks and Recreation

prepared by: WILSON OKAMOTO & ASSOCIATE

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I found this research project to be very educational as well as a beneficial experience. I've learned about the ownership and zoning of the Salt Lake area. There were many people involved in attempting to reclassify some of these areas.

Since the mid 1970's, development has been growing rapidly in Salt Lake. Condos after condos are being built. Before you know it, Salt Lake will be covered with apartments, condominiums, and residential houses. Instead of calling it Salt Lake, people will be calling it "The 2nd Waikiki". Sometimes I feel as though Salt Lake will soon sink into the ocean because of all the concrete we keep constructing. It is a bit depressing to see so much development being done for it is destroying the once owned Hawaiian land and its culture.

FOOTNOTES

¹H.T. Stearns and K.V. Vakuik, Geology and Grounwater Resources of the Island of Oahu, Hawaii.

²Honolulu Advertiser

³Honolulu Star Bulletin

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